

REMARKS

The Final Office Action of January 5, 2005, has been received and reviewed.

Claims 1-36, 41-52, 54, 55, and 57-81 are currently pending and under consideration in the above-referenced application. Of these, claims 1, 2, 5-10, 13-20, 23-29, 32-34, 59-66, and 68 stand rejected. The Office has indicated that claims 3, 4, 11, 12, 21, 22, 30, 31, and 67, recite allowable subject matter, but these claims have been objected to for depending from rejected base claims. Claims 35, 36, 41-52, 54, 55, 57, 58, and 69-81 have been allowed.

It is proposed that several claim amendments, as set forth in the listing of the claims, be entered and that claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 17, 20, 26, 29, 59, and 64-66 be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Allowed Claims / Allowable Subject Matter

The allowance of claims 35, 36, 41-52, 54, 55, 57, 58, and 69-81 is noted with appreciation.

The indication that claims 3, 4, 11, 12, 21, 22, 30, 31, and 67 recite allowable subject matter is also gratefully acknowledged. It is proposed that each of claims 3, 11, 21, 30, and 67 be amended to independent form to incorporate the limitations of the claims from which they depend.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 13-20, 23-29, 32-34, 59-66, and 68 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for reciting subject matter which is assertedly unpatentable over the subject matter taught in U.S. Patent 6,222,556 to Penna (hereinafter "Penna"), in view of teachings from U.S. Patent 6,529,207 to Landau et al. (hereinafter "Landau").

Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 17, 20, 26, 29, 59, and 64-66 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, rendering moot the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of these claims.

In view of the amendments proposed herein, claims 5-8 would depend directly or indirectly from claim 3, which is allowable.

Entry of the proposed amendments would also result in the direct or indirect dependencies of claims 13-16 from claim 11, which is allowable.

As proposed, claims 18, 19, and 22-25 would depend directly or indirectly, from claim 17, which is allowable.

Further in view of the amendment that have been proposed herein, if entered, claims 27, 28, and 31-34 would depend directly or indirectly from 30, which is allowable.

Additionally, if the proposed amendments are entered, claims 60-63 and 68 would depend directly or indirectly from claim 67, which is allowable.

Accordingly, entry of the proposed amendments and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 1, 2, 5-10, 13-20, 23-29, 32-34, 59-66, and 68 are respectfully requested.

Entry of Amendments

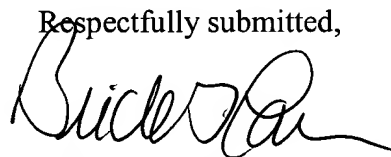
It is respectfully requested that the proposed claim amendments be entered. The proposed amendments do not introduce new matter into the application, nor would they require an additional search. Moreover, the proposed amendments to the claims remove all of the remaining issues that remain for appeal.

In the event that a decision is made not to enter the proposed claim amendments, entry thereof upon the filing of a Notice of Appeal in the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 3-8, 11-16, 18, 19, 21-25, 27, 28, 30-36, 41-52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 60-63, and 67-81 is allowable. An early notice of the allowability of each of these claims is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the above-referenced application has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing allowance of the above-referenced application remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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